

R E M A R K S

Drawings

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve the drawings.

Claim Amendments

Claim 40 was amended into independent form by including the features of claim 39.

Claims 39, 42 to 45 and 77 to 80 were canceled.

With respect of Rule 116, entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested, since the amendment serves to place allowable subject matter into allowable format. Moreover, the subject matter added to claim 40 was included in the claims prior to the final rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants are pleased to note that claims 36 to 38, 47 to 49, 52 to 57, 60 to 65 and 68 to 76 were allowed and that claims 40 and 41 were considered to contain allowable subject matter

(see the second sentence on page 2 of the December 24, 2008 Office Action).

It was stated in the second sentence of the Office Action that claim 41 was a dependent claim. This is incorrect. Claim 41 was an independent claim prior to the December 24, 2008 Office Action. During a telephone discussion between the Examiner and the undersigned on March 17, 2009, the Examiner confirmed that claim 41 is an independent claim and thus should have been indicated in the Office Action to be allowed.

Obviousness Rejection under 35 USC 103

Claims 39, 42, 45 and 77 to 80 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Nomura et al. (USP 6,279,790) in view of Kato et al. (USP 5,616,188) and Hatanda et al. (USP 5,587,101) for the reasons indicated in the last paragraph on page 2 of the December 24, 2008 Office Action.

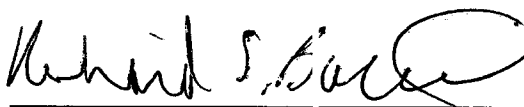
The 35 USC 103 rejection is moot in view of the above amendments.

Withdrawal of the 35 USC 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration is requested. Allwance is solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard S. Barth", written over a horizontal line.

RICHARD S. BARTH  
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